

# THE TENNESSEE WARBLER

Newsletter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

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December, 2005

Editor, Theresa Graham

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## *PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE*

As we turn our attention to winter birds and prepare for Christmas Counts, we can reflect on the fall migration and treasure the rare sightings of storm birds blown north.

Congratulations to Don Miller and the Greeneville Chapter for their hospitality at the fall meeting. In addition to terrific field trips, we had very interesting and informative presentations. Many ideas of ways to improve the organization and to even better meet the needs of members were discussed in an open "brain-storming" session attended by a large number of TOS members. Further discussions will be held during the winter meeting. Input from all is welcome!

Based on the recommendation of the Publications Committee, we have contracted for the digitization of the entire Migrant collection. This will simplify access for research endeavors. Van Harris initiated a fund for supplemental financial awards for worthy conservation research projects. Several members immediately donated additional funds to the account. If you wish to add your support, you may send contributions directly to Mac McWhirter, Treasurer. We discussed ways of educating members about the importance of making submissions to the Bird Records Committee; we also clarified which birds require documentation and offered organizational support to the committee. We also were updated on the progress of the statewide Bird Monitoring project by Mike Roedel and Charlie Muise.

The Highland Rim Chapter has agreed to host the Winter Meeting the last weekend in January in Manchester. We look forward to birding in this part of the state and to the programs planned for the event. Save the date! Also plan to attend the Spring Meeting in Nashville May 5-7, 2006 as planning is underway.

Danny Gaddy  
TOS President



# **TOS Winter Meeting**

## **Manchester, TN**

### **January 27, 28, and 29, 2006**

The Highland Rim Chapter extends a cordial invitation to TOS members to attend the 2006 Winter Meeting, to be held in Manchester on January 27, 28 and 29.

The Ambassador Inn & Luxury Suites at 925 Interstate Drive (I-24, Exit 110) will be the headquarters for the event. The Ambassador Inn is holding a block of rooms for TOS members. For reservations at the TOS rate, call 931-728-2200 or 800-237-9228. TOS rate is \$45.00+ tax for a room, and \$59.00+ tax for a suite. TOS rate includes a full breakfast bar. To obtain the special rate, be sure to mention that you are with the TOS group. Reservations may be canceled up to January 27.

Also, Tennessee Partners in Flight Monitoring Committee Meeting will take place from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Friday, January 27, 2006 in the conference room at the Ambassador Inn. A block of rooms are being held for these participants, and these rooms will be available for Thursday night, January 26, 2006. They may obtain the same special rate by mentioning TOS and/or Partners in Flight.

#### **Directions to the Ambassador Inn**

The Ambassador Inn is reached by taking Interstate 24 to Exit 110. The exit sign reads Manchester and Woodbury. The Ambassador sign and building are visible at one end of Interstate Drive as soon as you exit I-24. The Inn is within walking distance of Cracker Barrel, Oak Restaurant, and Crockett's. A Waffle House and a Mexican restaurant are also nearby.

#### **Alternative Lodging**

The following motels are located on or near Interstate Drive, and are close to the Ambassador Inn:

Hampton Inn (33 Paradise Street; 931-723-6363)  
Economy Inn (890 Interstate Drive; 931-728-9383)

#### **Field Trips**

Trips to the following sites are planned:

**Bark Camp Barrens & Sinking Pond – Habitat:** Large open grassland/woodland swamp and adjacent scrubby and mature pine/deciduous woodland and maybe a heronry (if sinking pond is dry). Sparrows, Northern Harrier/other field hawks, Woodpecker (including Red-headed), Pine and Yellow-rumped Warbler, Wood Ducks (if sinking pond is wet), Wild Turkey, various Blackbirds, and various winter-resident migrants.

**Woods Reservoir/Bradley Creek – Habitat:** Large open lake and bottomland hardwood and adjacent wooded shoreline and shallow mudflats.

Waterfowl: Loons, grebes, cormorants, geese and ducks

Fields: Gulls, Bald Eagles, and pipits

Shorebirds: (Snipe, Least Sandpipers, etc.) Winter Wrens, Barred Owls have to be called in; woodland hawks, and, maybe, Sandhill Cranes.

### **Registration**

The registration fee is \$10.00. Attendees may pay upon arrival at the Ambassador Inn, but pre-payment is encouraged.

Send check to

Vida Sherwood, Highland Rim TOS Treasurer  
1326 Harton Blvd.  
Tullahoma, TN 37388

### **Weekend Schedule**

#### Friday, January 27

6:30p – 8:30p      Registration and refreshments; announcements; sign-up for field trips.  
In the ambassador Inn Conference Room

#### Saturday, January 28

5:30a-7:00a	Breakfast
7:00a – 12:00p	Field trips – depart from Ambassador Inn
12:00p – 2:00p	Lunch; return to Ambassador Inn
2:00p – 2:45p	Talk by Charlie Muise on the <u>Tennessee Coordinated Monitoring Plan</u> . (Charlie is with the Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont, and is the TOS Knoxville Chapter President). In the Ambassador Inn Conference Room.
2:45p – 3:15p	Break
3:15p – 4:00p	Talk by John Lamb on <u>Avian Projects at Arnold AFB, TN</u> (John is the Conservation Biologist for AEDC, and a member of the Highland Rim Chapter of TOS). In the Ambassador Inn Conference Room.
4:00p – 5:00p	Break
5:00p – 7:00p	Dutch Treat supper at area restaurants of choice. And return to Ambassador Inn.
7:00p – 9:00p	Some light business and committee meetings in an Ambassador Inn suite for those members involved

#### Sunday, January 29

5:30a – 7:00a	Breakfast
7:00a – 12:00p	Field trips – depart from Ambassador Inn
12:00p	Compilation – Ambassador Inn Break Room or Lobby (Is available if needed)

## **2006 TOS SPRING MEETING**

### **Nashville, Tennessee**

### **May 5, 6, 7, 2006**

The Nashville Chapter extends an invitation to all TOS members across the state to attend the TOS Spring Meeting, to be held May 5, 6, 7, 2006. We welcome you to Music City to enjoy the Sights and Sounds of Spring.

The meeting will be headquartered at the Steeplechase Inn located at 5581 Franklin Pike Circle in Brentwood TN, off I-65 at Exit 74-A. The hotel is holding rooms for TOS members through April 10, 2006. Mention your TOS membership for the special rate of \$55.00, plus tax, per night for a room or \$75.99, plus tax, for a suite (the suite has a separate bedroom and a living room with a sleeper sofa, great bargain for a small group of friends or two couples). Also included is a Deluxe Complimentary Breakfast. Members are encouraged to make reservations well in advance.

Alternate lodging choices at Exit 74-A includes: Holiday Inn 615-373-2600, Comfort Inn 615-221-5001, and Hampton Inn 615-373-2212.

Registration will be held Friday evening, May 5, from 5:30-8:30 P.M. in Suite 401 at the Steeplechase Inn and from 6:30-7:00 A.M. on Saturday. Field trips will depart from the Steeplechase Inn parking lot on Saturday and Sunday mornings at 7:00.

The TOS Board Meeting and the Saturday evening banquet will take place at the Ed Jones Auditorium, Ellington Agricultural Center, just a few miles from the hotel.

The registration fee for the weekend event will be \$20.00. The Saturday evening buffet supper will include barbecue pork and chicken, cost will be \$15.00 per person. Please notify Amy Potter (see below) if you are interested in a vegetarian option. Registration and dinner payments must be received by April 15. Send checks to: Amy Potter, 616 Indian Ridge Drive, Nashville, TN, 37221.

Our speaker will be award winning nature photographer, speaker, writer, and educator Bobby Harrison. Currently he is associate professor and director of the Art Program at Oakwood College in Huntsville, Alabama. His articles and photographs have appeared in many calendars and magazines. Since February 2004 Mr. Harrison has been engaged in the on-going Ivory-billed Woodpecker research project in eastern Arkansas.

Field trips Saturday will include the locales you have grown to know and love in the Nashville area such as Radnor Lake State Natural Area, Shelby Bottoms and Beaman Park, a new 1,200 acre Metro/Davidson County park. Sunday will provide an opportunity to check these areas again, and explore others.

Looking forward to seeing everyone in Nashville in the Spring.

Susan Hollyday, President,  
Nashville Chapter TOS.

## HOUSE BILL TO DISMANTLE THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

There are few issues of greater concern to TOS members than the Endangered Species Act. On Thursday September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2005 the US House of Representatives passed a bill that would substantially weaken that Act. The bill was deceptively named the "Endangered Species Recovery Act of 2005" (HR. 3824) and it passed by a margin of 229 votes to 193.

The bill was sponsored by Congressmen Richard Pombo (R-CA) and Dennis Cardoza (D-CA), and co-sponsored by Tennessee's Marsha Blackburn.

This bill was rushed to the floor for a vote and has many destructive provisions including:

1. H.R. 3824 eliminates the of mandatory consultation between government agencies and endangered species experts at the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), replacing them with voluntary measures. This would enable registration of new toxic pesticides or the re-registration of pesticides previously deemed unsafe without biologists ever being given the opportunity to review data, comment, or influence the process.
2. H.R. 3824 allows the Secretary of The Interior, a political appointee, to unilaterally disregard scientific evidence and overturn decisions regarding endangered species, with no recourse for the public.
3. H.R. 3824 is fiscally irresponsible and provides for massive hand-outs to developers who seek to ravage important wetlands, forests, and prairies. The government would have to pay developers for the most expensive potential use of land should the presence of an endangered species prevent them from undertaking development projects. This gives the green light to greedy corporations to plan the most destructive and expensive development conceivable, and could bankrupt the endangered species program and put further financial strain on an already cash-strapped government.
4. Currently, federal agencies must adhere to Recovery Plans, set in place to ensure adequate protection for endangered species H.R. 3824 allows federal agencies to pick and choose which aspects of the Recovery Plans they wish to follow. It further mandates that species be de-listed in individual states regardless of the overall status of the species as a whole.

We urge TOS members to take note of how the Tennessee delegation voted.

Voting for the bill were:

Bill Jenkins, 1<sup>st</sup> District  
John Duncan, Jr., 2<sup>nd</sup> District  
Zach Wamp, 3<sup>rd</sup> District  
Lincoln Davis, 4<sup>th</sup> District  
Marsha Blackburn, 7<sup>th</sup> District  
John Tanner, 8<sup>th</sup> District  
Harold Ford, Jr., 9<sup>th</sup> District

Voting against the bill were:

Jim Cooper, 5<sup>th</sup> District  
Bart Gordon, 6<sup>th</sup> District

## 2005 TOS Conservation and Research Fund Grants

At the fall TOS meeting, I was pleased to announce the 2005 TOS grant recipients, on behalf of the Conservation and Research Fund Committee. We had a difficult choice because we had a number of solid applications. We hope that next year we will have the honor of choosing from an equally strong field. Please spread the word to anyone you know that is interested in research and/or conservation of birds in Tennessee.

TOS is also accepting donations for this purpose. Several hundred dollars was donated at the fall meeting. We hope one day to have an endowment, which would ensure TOS can have an active role in bird research and conservation into the future.

**Katherine Goodpasture Memorial Grant:** (\$500)

Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park (George Ivey/Paul Super)

TOS grant money will help:

- 1) monitor reproductive activity at the two known active peregrine falcon aeries in the park to confirm their activity and noting especially number of young, hatching and fledging dates, and sight-identifying food items. Two other sites in North Carolina may also be visited.
- 2) exploring any additional reported falcon activity to locate any possible additional sites.
- 3) conducting quantitative transect surveys for grassland birds in Cades Cove and on at least three grassy balds in the park (Gregory, Andrews, and Purchase Knob), especially comparing fields that are grazed, burned, mowed, and un-managed.
- 4) conducting observations of grassland birds in these same sites to determine breeding phenology, identify any species missed during the transects, and observe behavior pre- and post-management action.
- 5) assist with educational programs, such as International Migratory Bird Day, in the park, including leading bird walks and assisting with bird banding demonstrations.
- 6) finish writing text for any outstanding bird species web pages for the Discover Life In America web site.
- 7) hire an intern with existing bird observation and education skills.

We made two Conservation and Research Funding Awards, each of \$1000:

**Jim Giocomo Ph.D. Big Barrens Project**

Grassland birds have declined at greater rates over the past 30 years than any other group of avian species across North America (BBS data, 1966-1996). A primary cause of loss is the dramatic decrease of native grasslands, which have decreased by over 99% since European settlement of North America. Monitoring bird populations in the breeding and winter seasons through banding efforts could provide much needed information about the impacts of these land management activities.

***2005 TOS Conservation and Research Fund Grants - Continued***

TOS funds will help:

- 1) Develop a partnership among Fort Campbell, The Nature Conservancy, the University of Tennessee, state agencies, USDA-NRCS, and others and use that partnership as the vehicle to promote grassland bird conservation on public and private lands surrounding Fort Campbell;
- 2) Inventory breeding and wintering grassland bird populations and habitat within and adjacent to Fort Campbell as a means of identifying potential cooperating landowners;
- 3) Use Fort Campbell as a case study to identify specific management recommendations to meet military training needs and winter habitat requirements for declining grassland bird species;

**Lesley Bulluck, MD. For work studying Golden-winged Warblers.**

Golden-winged Warbler populations are declining range-wide and specifically in the southern portion of the range due to habitat loss. The Cumberland Mountains population in eastern Tennessee represents a stronghold in this southern portion of their range. The information gained from long-term, continuous studies of avian distribution and demography is instrumental in our understanding and the subsequent conservation of threatened species.

- 1.) Continue to collect distribution and abundance data throughout the Cumberland Mountains
  - 2.) This distribution data has a second benefit of validating a landscape habitat model developed for the Golden-winged in the Cumberland Mountains
  - 3.) Continue to color band males, females and nestlings on four main study sites and collect return rate and dispersal data
  - 4.) Continue to find and monitor nests on four main study sites
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**J. B. OWEN AWARD**

The Knoxville Bird Club has selected Ijams Nature Center to receive the 2005 J.B. Owen Award of \$500 for support of the center's outreach programs which promote conservation of birds in Tennessee.

Through these programs, in which an Ijams educator travels to regional schools, Ijams instructs 30,000 students annually with curriculum-based classes that augment the classroom instruction of teachers.

Many of the outreach programs include a live non-releasable educational bird that focuses a student's attention and creates a lasting memory. In addition, Ijams educators routinely speak to adult groups about local birds, their habitat requirements and conservation status.

Currently Ijams has transportation boxes only for smaller birds of prey. The Owen Award will be used to purchase transportation cases for Ijams' Barred Owl and Red-tailed Hawk. The high quality cases will enable Ijams to take these large birds to schools and other off-site groups.

## CHAPTER NEWS

The **GREENEVILLE CHAPTER** sends a big "thank you" to all who participated in the recent Fall TOS Meeting held in Greeneville. This is the first time that our chapter has hosted a state meeting, and we were delighted to be the site of the event. The presentations, discussion sessions, and field trips were beneficial and enjoyable to all involved.

The fall migration in Greene County appeared to be influenced heavily by dry, warm weather and few cold fronts. No major fallouts were reported, although quite a few occasional or rare species were recorded. Noteworthy were: Olive-sided Flycatcher (at Cutshaw's Bog in the Cherokee National Forest on August 14), Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (near the Nolichucky River in the Tusculum area on September 9; probably only the second record for the county), Sedge Wren (2-5 observed at the Clyde Austin 4-H Training Center on September 30, October 1-2, and October 5), Gray-cheeked Thrush (on October 3), Philadelphia Vireo (on October 3), Blue-winged Warbler (on September 24), Northern Waterthrush (on October 18), Vesper Sparrow (on October 27 and 30), Lincoln's Sparrow (on October 23), and Bobolink (1-16 on September 24, October 1, and October 10).

The chapter's Christmas count is scheduled for Monday, December 26. Members of nearby chapters are encouraged to participate. For further info, contact Don Miller (423-639-4100).

Don Miller

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The **JOHN SELLARS** TOS met in October for a program presented by Alice Kling. The program, *Birds Encountered in World Travels*, was very much enjoyed by those present.

Several members have enjoyed birding on recent trips, including California, Washington, and other jaunts.

Members reported local bird news, including hummingbird status, interesting yard birds & behavior, migration notes, and birds of interest, in general.

The group will meet at the Turrentine home in Normandy during November's meeting, followed by a field trip to Bedford Lake, a local TWRA managed lake

nearby. It is a nice area for ducks and other bird "treats".

Christmas Bird Count is slated for December 27th with an inclement weather date of the 29th. We will depart from LaGuardo Recreation area if any others are interested. In January, we hope to travel together on a birding venture, perhaps to west Tennessee. For our February meeting, we'll welcome Polly Rooker as a guest speaker from TWRA.

We are delighted for any newcomers and do not hesitate to contact us for information. E-mail includes Melissa & Roy at [roymel@cafes.net](mailto:roymel@cafes.net) or Ralph & Kay at [oligobird@aol.com](mailto:oligobird@aol.com).

Melissa Turrentine

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**KNOXVILLE CHAPTER** TOS - On August 3, Don Holt, member of the Herndon (Elizabethton) Chapter of TOS, presented the program at the Knoxville chapter meeting - "Some Odonates of Upper East Tennessee." Everyone enjoyed Don's extensive knowledge of dragonflies and damsel flies and great photography - not to mention his sense of humor ~ thanks, Don!

Our September meeting was our semi-annual picnic this year held at the Knoxville Zoo picnic pavilion and later a guided tour of the aviary exhibit at the Kids Cove area.

Sept 17 - Fall migratory bird count was held on Sept 17 – many members participated.

Sept 25 - Fall Knox County Bird Count – 16 members participated

Once again our members flocked to the TOS fall meeting in Greeneville, Sep 30 - Oct 2 - several chapter members attended and had a great time - many thanks to the Greeneville Chapter!

In October, Dr. Charles Faulkner, University of TN, presented his research which deals with parasites in birds - using data he has collected at the MAPS stations in the GSMNP.

Kathy Bivens

## CHAPTER NEWS

The **LEE & LOIS HERNDON CHAPTER** of Tennessee Ornithological Society held its annual Fall Bird Count on Saturday, Sept. 24. A total of 32 people participated in the count, which included territories in Carter County as well as the counties of Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi and Washington.

Gary Wallace, Frank Ward, Josh Ferry, Glen Eller, Harry Farthing, Bryan Stevens, David Thometz, Tess Cumbie, Reece Jamerson, Peggy Stevens, Tom McNeil, Michele Glass, Rob Biller, Rick Knight, Gilbert Derouen, Charlie Parker, Ellen Parker, Joe McGuiness, Kim Stroud, Brookie and Jean Potter, Don Holt, Dianne Draper, Wallace and Carolyn Coffey and Chris O'Bryan participated in the count.

In addition, a banding station operated on Big Bald Mountain in Unicoi County was included in the count's total. Participants at the station included Mark Hopey, Kathy Gunther, Cathy Flick, Lynn Brandon and Rad and Lily Mayfield.

A total of 119 species was recorded for the 2005 Fall Bird Count. The European Starling ranked as the most numerous bird with 930 individuals found. Other numerous birds included Canada Goose (680), Chimney Swift (558), American Robin (523) and Common Grackle (433).

Some birds went undetected on this count, including Northern Bobwhite, Barn Owl and Red-breasted Nuthatch.

Highlights included Gadwall, Eared Grebe, Great Egret, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Bald Eagle, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, Loggerhead Shrike, Philadelphia Vireo, Bobolink and 21 species of warblers, including Blackpoll Warbler, Kentucky Warbler and Blue-winged Warbler.

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The Lee & Lois Herndon Chapter now has its own yahoo group. To visit the group, log onto <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HerndonBirdClub/>

The group permits those with Internet access to view photographs of group members and activities, participate in polls and post messages. The yahoo group also provides a convenient calendar of events. Anyone who subscribes, at no charge, to the group

can participate in any of its interactive features.

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The chapter led its annual October Saturday Bird Walks at Sycamore Shoals State Park, Elizabethton, throughout the month of October. The walks attracted members of the public as well as chapter members each Saturday in October. A cumulative total of 60 species was seen on these walks.

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The chapter's annual Elizabethton Christmas Bird Count will be held Saturday, Dec. 17. The chapter's annual Roan Mountain Christmas Bird Count is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 18.

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Chapter officers are Tom McNeil, president; Don Holt, vice president; Dianne Draper, secretary; and Gilbert Derouen, treasurer.

Bryan Stevens,

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Each year the TOS **MEMPHIS CHAPTER** March Meeting includes a banquet and special program. This year we're excited to have well known woodpecker expert Jerome Jackson, presenting *In Search of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker: Past History and Recent Reports*. Dr. Jackson is Professor of Biology at Florida Gulf Coast University. We would be happy to have TOS members from around the State join us for this special program on March 15. If you're interested please contact Carolyn Bullock or Margaret Jefferson of the Memphis Chapter for details.

This fall many Memphis Chapter members attended programs on the recent Ivory-billed Woodpecker sightings at the Cache River Refuge in Arkansas. Gene Sparling, who made the first sighting while kayaking in the Cache River National Wildlife Refuge on Feb. 11, 2004, described his experience. Scott Simon, Director of the Nature Conservancy of Arkansas, described the evidence and conservation efforts. It was very exciting to hear two true believers describe their experiences. We hope the search teams will soon have the definitive evidence and photos we're all hoping for.

We'll have an opportunity to do some Ivory-billed Woodpecker searching of our own. In early April, Van Harris will lead a Field Trip to the Cache River

## CHAPTER NEWS

### Memphis Chapter - *Continued*

National Wildlife Refuge and nearby Dagmar Wildlife Management Area where a number of viewing sites have been established.

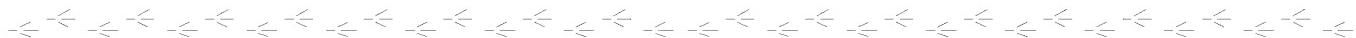
The Mid-South Raptor Center is in operation after raptor rehabilitation programs were relocated from the Memphis Zoo to facilities in Shelby Farms Park. Knox Martin recently hosted an open house at the Center. We had an opportunity to see his avian tenants, admire his new building, and inspect the cages built by Eagle Scout Alex McWhirter. The guard goose kept everyone in line.

Many MTOS members enjoyed viewing entries to the 2005 Federal Duck Stamp Contest that was held in Memphis this fall. Sherrie Russell Meline's image of a Ross' Goose was chosen for use on the 2006 Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp. In addition to contest entries the complete federal collection of Duck Stamps and prints was on display at the Memphis College of Art. This historic display was a great reminder to support migratory waterfowl habitat preservation and restoration by purchasing a Duck Stamp each year.

This year's MTOS program schedule relies heavily on the presentation of trip reports by our members. We kicked off the year with *Birding Trip Show and Tell* programs in September and October. Seven members shared photos from their recent travels.

The Memphis Chapter was saddened by the passing of member Don Preston in September. Don was quite active in the Chapter, participating in hikes and meetings and serving as our newsletter editor.

Margaret Jefferson



### Free Ivory-Billed Four-Color PDF Available Online

Sibley adds a bird! If you have a copy of The Sibley Guide to Birds, first published in 2000, you know that it does not include the Ivory-billed Woodpecker; after all it was extinct at the time, wasn't it? Take heart: the author David Allen Sibley has created an update. A free four-color .pdf is available online. Go to: [www.sibleyguides.com/ivorybilled.htm](http://www.sibleyguides.com/ivorybilled.htm)

**NASHVILLE CHAPTER** - In September our Annual Fall Flock (also our monthly meeting) was held at Shelby Bottoms. We counted 46 species, just before Hurricane Rita brought in winds and a bit of rain.

NTOS members led Wednesday morning bird walks at Radnor Lake SNA September 14-October 19. We encourage new and experienced birders to enjoy the passing migrants and local birds as well.

The Nashville Fall Bird Count was held October 8<sup>th</sup>. We had 118 species reported on the count, up from 103 last year. Twenty species of warblers were recorded. Most unusual birds included one Franklin's Gull and six Laughing Gulls at Old Hickory Lake, and a single Black-necked Stilt at Gallatin Steam Plant.

On October 15<sup>th</sup> Jon Mann led us on a field trip to Cheatham Co. and western Davidson Co. We had a total of 60 species. Included were one Lincoln's Sparrow, three Red-headed Woodpeckers, and four Winter Wrens. Only four species of warblers were recorded. What a difference a week makes!

Several NTOS members recently consulted with Bridgestone Americas, headquartered in Nashville. These birders helped identify migrants which might be seen at several of the Bridgestone plants in North and South America. The project will be presented to local Bridgestone employees and the communities in which the plants are located. "Connecting with Nature's Travelers" is a fine example of corporate involvement in environmental awareness.

Our program in October, "What You Always Wanted to know about Birds but were Afraid to Ask" presented a panel of expert birders answering questions from members. A lively discussion brought understanding, and a good time was had by all.

Susan Hollyday

## ONLINE BIRD-FINDING GUIDE FOR TENNESSEE

All TOS members have their favorite sites to bird in Tennessee. How about introducing other birders to your favorite sites by writing a description of it for the online Tennessee bird-finding guide on the TOS website at [http://www.tnbirds.org/birding\\_tn.htm](http://www.tnbirds.org/birding_tn.htm)? See the Birding in East Tennessee page for examples of online site guides.

The site guides should include a brief introduction to the site, detailed directions on how to get to the site, and detailed instructions on how to bird the site. These instructions should include how, where, and when to find the various birds that make the site noteworthy. If possible, the site guides can be illustrated with photos of the site and of the sites featured birds. Knowledge of website programming is not necessary - just send me the text and, if possible, photos, and I'll work with you on editing and formatting it for the website.

If you are interested, please contact me at [cgnichol@bellsouth.net](mailto:cgnichol@bellsouth.net). - Chuck Nicholson, TOS Webmaster

### FALL BIRD COUNT DATA WANTED

All Tennessee Bird Counts should have the following data included with the actual bird statistics. These statistics help future researchers make better use of the data.

- 1 – Miles and hours by foot, car, other modes (canoe, horse, etc.)
- 2 – Miles and hours for night birding (owling) are kept separately.
- 3 – Feeder watching hours are also kept separate; include names of feeder watchers.
- 4 – Please include all relevant weather data: temps; wind; precipitation, if any; storms/fronts.
- 5 – Names of all participants.
- 6 – Please send the data to Ron Hoff, 282 Hackworth Lane, Clinton, TN 37716. Email is acceptable at [rondolly@esper.com](mailto:rondolly@esper.com). I would like to have the data sometime in the first month after the count. This allows timely reporting to the Migrant.

Thanks to all those who participated. Your efforts are much appreciated.

Ron Hoff  
Clinton, TN

### Contributions & Memorials Received

Thank you to the following members who have generously contributed to the TOS Conservation and Research Fund:

Anita and Danny Gaddy  
Ken Dubke  
Van Harris and the Agnes and Nancy Harris Charitable Fund  
Charlie Muise  
Nashville Chapter TOS

Louise Ward Memorial Received:  
Jan Collins & Julie Finn & Family

Mac McWhirter, Treasurer

## Central Dark

### New York City dims skyscraper lights to help save birds

Love cities? Love birds? Wish the former would stop killing the latter? Audubon wants to help. Its "Lights Out New York" effort is encouraging Big Apple building owners to turn lights down or off above the 40th floor, from midnight to daylight, during spring and fall migrations. Not only will dimming prevent light-mesmerized birds from smashing into skyscrapers — a similar effort in Chicago saves an estimated 10,000 of our feathered friends a year -- but it'll cut energy use in the bargain. White-throated sparrows, dark-eyed juncos, and yellowthroats are among the avian collision casualties (sadly, the city's ubiquitous pigeons avoid buildings just fine). NYC Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe noted that birds rely ever more on city parks for habitat. "This is recognizing that beyond architectural beauty, natural beauty is something that can't be replaced," he said. Building owner groups expect near total compliance with the voluntary program.

**straight to the source:** Reuters [http://www.grist.org/cgi-bin/forward.pl?forward\\_id=5776](http://www.grist.org/cgi-bin/forward.pl?forward_id=5776)  
20 Sep 2005

**straight to the source:** Newsday, Associated Press, Nahal Toosi, 20 Sep 2005

## Book Shelf

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*"CHIMNEY SWIFTS: America's Mysterious Birds  
above the Fireplace"*  
by Paul and Georganne Kyle

There was a time in North America—before our log-cabin building, axe-wielding European ancestors arrived—when all Chimney Swifts nested and roosted in hollow trees. But these amazing birds proved to be highly adaptable.

As we cut down all of the old-growth trees, the swifts began to nest and roost in the early settlers' chimneys. Today, just about all chimney swifts almost exclusively use human-made structures. Yet, modern chimney designs are having a negative affect on their population.

Paul and Georganne Kyle are in charge of a chimney swift research station in Austin, Texas. Their insightful book discusses the latest research on these beneficial birds that eat thousands of small flying insects—their diet includes mosquitoes, flies and termites.

The Kyle's book is the latest in the Louise Lindsey Merrick Natural Environment Series published by Texas A&M University Press, 2005, 152 pages, color and b&w photos and illustrations, paperback, \$16.95.

Submitted by Lyn Bales  
Knoxville Chapter TOS

## Evening Chatter

*Only the cackling  
of the turkeys in treetops  
across the lake  
pierced the pink sky as we  
watched buffleheads  
and hooded  
mergansers  
seek a quiet cove.  
Sunset.  
Carolina wren  
has the last word.*

by Melissa Turrentine

## In Memory

*Don Preston, Memphis Chapter  
Died September 24, 2005*

*Nancy Wood Pond, Memphis Chapter  
Died October 21, 2005*



*We're not asking the member to do anything – we're letting them know what was done on their behalf. TOS was added to the list of organizations supporting the attached letter to the FCC regarding tower kills. The letter appears to be extremely well written and the issue certainly deserves our enthusiastic support.*

*Danny Gaddy*

**PLEASE SIGN-ON TO THE ATTACHED LETTER THAT WILL BE DELIVERED  
TO FCC COMMISSIONERS TO URGE THEM TO TAKE ACTION TO PREVENT  
AVIAN MORTALITY AT COMMUNICATION TOWERS.**

You need simply reply to this message that you wish to be signed-on, and send us the name of the signer and the signer's title, organization, and full address. If you can pass this on for other organizations to sign-on, please do so. Organizations only, please. We need to hear from you by October 21, 2005, please.

It is estimated that the 90,000+ communication towers in the U.S. cause the death of at least 5 million and as many as 50 million birds a year. The plurality of these fatalities occur during fall migration, with over 90% of species killed night migrating neotropical migratory birds.

The Federal Communication Commission (FCC) has received extensive information documenting that communication towers are a significant and continuing source of mortality to migratory birds but it has refused to act to better protect migratory birds despite the availability of simple measures to prevent mortality.. In 1999, the Director of the U. S. FWS urged the FCC to complete an Environmental Impact Statement to ascertain the extent of mortality, causes, and mitigation, but the FCC refused. The FWS Director noted that "The cumulative impacts of the proliferation of communication towers on migratory birds, added to the combined cumulative impacts of all other mortality factors, could significantly affect populations of many species." In September 2000, the U.S. FWS issued Tower Siting Guidelines that would prevent most avian mortality, but the FCC refuses to adopt these sound prevention measures.

ABC and partners have steadfastly attempted to convince the FCC to act but law suits, administrative tower appeals, other filings, and many meetings have not produced results as thousands of new towers have been erected. We are now attempting to gain the focus of new members of the FCC and a new Chairman, gain meetings with them, and finally resolve this issue.

YOU CAN HELP! As we are in fall migration, this is the right time for you to sign-on your organization and let the FCC know that they need to act NOW to stop the killing. Many of the birds killed are FWS Birds of Management Concern, and include large numbers of such declining species as Golden-winged Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Northern Parula, Connecticut Warbler, and Cape May Warbler.

The AP News story below documents yet another tragic bird kill at a communication tower in Wisconsin during this fall's migration. Red solid state lights and guy wires undoubtedly led to the kills. If you wish to receive a photo of the dead birds, let me know.

We need to hear from you by the close of business on October 21 as to who will join with American Bird Conservancy and other conservation organizations to demand that the FCC stop the mortality. PLEASE SEND US THE NAME OF THE SIGNER, TITLE, ORGANIZATION, AND ADDRESS.

Thank you.

Gerald W. Winegrad, American Bird Conservancy

## Tower Wires Kill 400 Birds in One Night

Thu Oct 6, 8:03 AM ET

MADISON, Wis (AP). - As many as 400 songbirds were killed in one night after they flew into wires holding up a television tower. The deaths may spur the creation of a group to study the dangers communication towers pose to migrating birds, said specialists with the Department of Natural Resources.

"It's an issue that has been with us for decades," DNR avian ecologist Sumner Matteson said. "But we really haven't done anything about it." The birds were killed the night of Sept. 13-14 at the WMTV tower. "There were birds all over the place," said Steven Ugoretz, a DNR environmental specialist who works on tower-related issues. Searchers found 172 birds around the base of the 1,100-foot tower. Crows, cats and other scavengers took another 200 or more, and Ugoretz estimates more birds likely died because no one searched a heavily wooded area just north of the tower.

A similar kill occurred the night of Sept. 7-8, Ugoretz said. Such kills are not unusual during spring and fall migrations, though Ugoretz and Matteson said they are an increasing concern because of multiple threats to the world's songbirds. Most of the dead birds Sept. 14 were warblers. Other birds included red-eyed vireos, American redstarts, ovenbirds, common yellowthroats and a rose-breasted grosbeak.

Matteson and Ugoretz said they want to form a task force of bird experts and communications industry representatives to study the issue. Possible solutions include using lights to illuminate wires and changing the blinking frequency of red warning lights, Matteson said. A telephone message left for WMTV's general manager was not immediately returned Wednesday.

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### REGISTRATION FORM - TOS SPRING MEETING MAY 5, 6, & 7, 2006

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

TOS Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_ Registrations @ \$20each

\$ \_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_ Dinner Reservations @ \$15 each

\$ \_\_\_\_ Total amount enclosed. Make Check payable to Nashville TOS

Vegetarian Meal? Yes  No

Mail registration form and check to: Amy Potter  
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Nashville, TN 37221

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**FEBRUARY 28<sup>TH</sup> DEADLINE**

The deadline date for the April issue of *The Tennessee Warbler* is February 28<sup>th</sup>. Please submit all articles, announcements, reports and items of interest by this deadline date.

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